



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: March 31, 2005

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MD Parole and Probation is a National Leader ***Maryland Parole Supervision Results Better Than National Average***

TOWSON, MD (March 30, 2005) In response to the Urban Institute's report released today that consolidates state conditional release data for 1994 collected by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Justice, the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) reports that parole recidivism rates are below the national aggregated average.

"Parole supervision is often misunderstood and sometimes becomes an easy target if individual states and their programs are not taken into consideration," said Judith Sachwald, Director of the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation. "This is especially true in Maryland; as a result of the Division's proactive approach to community supervision, far fewer offenders on parole are being reincarcerated."

DPP FY 2004 statistics show that under Proactive Community Supervision, the Division's most innovative supervision approach (currently available in 4 areas of the State), 73% of discretionary parole cases are closed satisfactorily. DPP statistics also show that 64% of discretionary parole cases under general supervision are closed satisfactorily. This success rate is higher than the national average.

"Parole supervision works, if you work at it, and Maryland is working hard. Parole gives people the external support and the opportunity to become productive members of society. Without parole supervision, many offenders would never make the successful transition back to the community and to their families," says Carl Wicklund, Executive Director of the American Probation and Parole Association.

According to the Dept. of Public Safety and Correctional Services Repeat Incarceration Supervision Cycle (RISC) report, 31.4% of FY 2001 conditionally released offenders (parole and mandatory release) were returned to prison for a new conviction within two years. RISC statistics also show that in FY 2001 only 21.3% of paroled offenders (discretionary) were reincarcerated for a new conviction.

When asked about the value of parole supervision, DPSCS Secretary Mary Ann Saar said, "It makes sense to identify and release the individuals who are less likely to reoffend and focus our institutional resources on high-risk offenders." Parole provides significant savings to the State as an alternative to incarceration. Offenders who are released on parole are selected because of indicators that show they are more likely to make the transition to a crime-free lifestyle.

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